

extends the VA's authority to provide Vietnam veterans with hospital and nursing home care for disabilities, which may have resulted from exposure to dioxin. The Act also extends the VA's authority to provide priority health care services for disabilities possibly related to exposure to ionizing radiation during nuclear testing or during certain service in Japan following World War II. Finally, the Act also authorizes appropriations of \$379.4 million for major medical facility construction and repair projects and 15.8 million for major medical facility leases for the VA.

Because of the important benefits that this legislation will provide to our Nation's veterans and their families, I am very gratified to sign these two bills into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 2, 1994.

NOTE: H.R. 5244, approved November 2, was assigned Public Law No. 103-446, and H.R. 3313, approved November 2, was assigned Public Law No. 103-452.

Teleconference Remarks at the State University of New York in Albany, New York

November 3, 1994

The President. Thank you very much. Governor Cuomo, President Swygert, Senator and Mrs. Moynihan, mayors, and ladies and gentlemen, and students: Let me say that I am very excited to be here today with Governor Cuomo and very excited to be a part of this meeting.

I'm anxious to get on with the show and to see the students that are in other places throughout New York. But I want to try to set the stage for the importance of this event today by speaking just for a few minutes about what this means, what we're about to see, what it means for the future of all the students here, for the future of the economy of New York and that of the United States, and for how we will all live in the 21st century.

Governors, like Governor Cuomo—and I used to be one; sometimes I think it's the best job I ever had—[laughter]—but Gov-

ernors have spent, for the last 15 years, increasing amounts of time of education. Why? Because we know that it's the only route to a guaranteed success in life economically; because we know it changes people inside, gives people a greater sense of their own capacity. The ability to develop the internal material that God has given all of us is what makes people want to look to the future and want to make the most of their own lives.

Increasingly, education has become a concern for the National Government, not because we do education—the magic of education occurs in the classroom—but because the power of the United States to lead the world economically is inextricably tied to our capacity to see that all of our children get a good education and then that people seek education for a lifetime. So we have worked hard the last 2 years to do things like expand the Head Start program to make sure that our young people are ready to learn, to have school-to-work opportunities for apprenticeships so that young people who don't go to college can at least get good jobs and have higher level skills, to increase access to college through more affordable college loans for all students. Next year, 110 New York institutions of higher education and 160,000 New York students will be eligible for lower interest, longer repayments on their college loans. So it will be easier for young people to go to college.

But the essence of what we're trying to do is to blend two things that may seem inconsistent, a commitment to educational excellence for all students, including kids who come from poor and difficult backgrounds. One of the things we have tried to reverse in the last 2 years—and the Congress has helped—is the idea that if you come from a tough background you're really not expected to learn as much. All the whole apparatus of Federal law was directed basically toward that assumption. We don't believe that anymore, and it is unacceptable. We believe all of our children can learn, and they should be expected to learn. And high expectations in the classroom has a lot to do with how people do.

The second thing we've tried to do to go with high expectations nationally is to emphasize grassroots reform—to know that all

schools, all communities, all students are different—and individualized learning, different classrooms, different schools. It's important for us not to say at the national or at the State level, "Here is the model of how you must do it," but instead to say, "Here are the standards you ought to achieve. You figure out how to do it."

The link between a national commitment to excellence and a commitment to grassroots reform and a lot of individual efforts, in large measure, is technology. We are seeing a technological revolution in this country and, indeed, all over the world. Along with that, we're seeing a revolution in the way people learn, with kind of multimedia things like we'll use today. And more and more teachers are not just talking heads, doing what I'm doing, imparting information to you, but people who help students learn, who facilitate their ability to learn through technology. So what that means is that for the Governor and for me, we have to do what we can to make sure that the technology is there for every student in every classroom in the State of New York and in the United States to hook into as much information and as much learning as possible.

New York has an information superhighway project that is connecting 6,000 schools and 7,000 libraries to businesses and other units. This is amazing. We're going to be able to do this all over the country and all over the world. That's what the information superhighway is, people sitting in Albany, New York, communicating with people in Rio de Janeiro or in Pakistan or in China or Russia or somewhere else, sharing information, learning together, growing together. It is amazing what is possible—so that we will be able to say to all of our young people, no matter where they live, "Here's a very high bar of learning. You have to clear it if you want to do well in life. And you can figure out how to do it at the local level, but the whole world will be at your fingertips." That is the commitment that Governor Cuomo has tried to push and that I have tried to push.

The last thing I want to say is that, in order for all this to work, the students have to want to do it and have to believe in it. The young people have to have a hunger to learn and

an understanding that you can't drop out of school, you have to stay in, and it is the ticket to a fascinating, exciting life.

The best days of this country are ahead of us if we make the most of this information explosion and put it with what is inside the heads of all of our children.

And therefore, before I get done, if I could just compliment Governor Cuomo on one thing that is an obsession with me. The State of New York in the last 10 years has lowered its school dropout rate by almost 50 percent. And if everybody in the country had done that, our educational system would be in much better shape. That is an extraordinary achievement and a great credit to the State of New York. And I thank you for that.

So having said that, now we've got some students who are in other communities throughout the State, and I think we're ready to hear from them. Can we start?

[At this point, teachers and students at various locations in the State described and demonstrated the ways they each use electronic technologies such as Internet, CD-ROM, and E-mail. A student then responded to a question from Governor Cuomo.]

The President. Can we go back to Buffalo? I wanted to ask Marquis a question. You know, it's one thing to be able to work one of these computers and quite another to know how to go after the information. How hard was it for you to figure out where the sources of information were, how you would go about researching this paper? How did you learn what to look for in the computer?

Q. Well, I learned this information with the help of my computer research teacher. And I was able to use this information to go into the Internet and research various things because Internet has different kinds of information which they draw from all parts of the world. And so it's like a really big encyclopedia where I was able to find the research I needed and the graphics and things like that.

The President. Could you explain to us—one of the things that was said was that maybe now students other places could look at your research and find out what you found out about the volcano. How do you log that in? How do they go about finding that?

Q. Well, if they are able to get into the Internet, then they can go through and search through under the headlines of volcanoes, like I did, and then—I've already set up the information that they needed. They would just have to be able to find it, and then they'll have access to information that I had.

Q. Maybe I could help Marquis out a little bit with this. Since we have developed the Worldwide Web server at our site, we'll be able to post his presentation there. So the student would simply go in and, if they were using a MacIntosh, they could just click on something that said viewer presentation on a volcano, prepared by Marquis Wilford.

The President. Marquis, what's the most surprising thing you've found out about volcanoes in your research?

Q. Well, the most surprising thing that I was able to find out is that they were able to send a robot down in to view the pictures inside the thing. I didn't know that that technology was available. And now that I've found it out, I know that we all have access to see things like that. Because the heat of the volcano and stuff, I didn't know that technology would be able to do that much.

The President. I didn't either, until you told me today. Thank you very much. Let's give him a hand. Wasn't he great? *[Applause]*

[President Swygert thanked the President and invited him to make closing comments.]

The President. I just want to say one thing in closing. These different examples show us what is possible. We cannot rest until every school and every student has access to the kind of technology we've celebrated and learned about today. That has got to be our goal.

This is sort of a revolution in the nature, actually, of the job that the Governor and the Senator and I do. By trying to extend the availability of this sort of technology, our primary job is not to do something for somebody else but to make it possible for other people to do things for themselves. It's the ultimate example of what is now called empowerment, and it is very exciting, very rewarding. And we've got to keep at it until every student can do what Marquis did for us today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 a.m. in the Campus Center Building at the State University of New York. In his remarks, he referred to Patrick Swygert, president, State University of New York-Albany.

Remarks at a Rally for Democratic Candidates in Albany *November 3, 1994*

Thank you. Thank you so much, Governor Cuomo. I'm too hoarse to shout over you—*[laughter]*—but I'm very happy to be here.

Thank you, Governor Cuomo, Senator Moynihan, Congressman McNulty, Comptroller McCall, to the mayor here, Mayor Jennings, and the other mayors and labor leaders and students and citizens and Americans who are here. This is a great day for New York.

I'm like Mario. I don't have a speech either—*[laughter]*—except what's in my heart. I came here to ask you to vote for Carl McCall, to ask you to send Senator Moynihan back with a record margin, send them a message back, and most of all, to ask you to make Mario Cuomo the real "comeback kid" of New York State.

This election is shaping up to be one of those classic American elections that gets replayed every so often in our history: a race between hope and fear; a race between tomorrow and yesterday; a race between people who appeal to what is best in us and those who tell us that everything is just terrible and we ought to lash out; a race between those of us who challenge the American people to do better, who try to empower them to make the most of their own lives and those who offer them cheap and easy promises of a time which never was and never will be. That is what we are facing in these closing days.

I want to tell you something, folks. I understand why a lot of Americans are frustrated today. You know, there are a lot of people out there who haven't gotten a raise or are worried about losing their health care or think that their future is uncertain. But I'll tell you something, after 21 months this country's in better shape than it was when we took office.